



# LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

*Celebrating 25 Years of Advocacy & Achievement*

## COMMISSIONERS

Patricia Curry  
**Chair**

Susan F. Friedman  
**Vice Chair**

Steven M. Olivas, Esq.  
**Vice Chair**

Stacey Savelle  
**Vice Chair**

Carol O. Biondi  
Ann Franzen  
Helen A. Kleinberg  
Dr. La-Doris McClanely  
Rev. Cecil L. Murray  
Sandra Rudnick  
Adelina Sorkin, LCSW/ACSW  
Martha Trevino Powell  
Dr. Harriette F. Williams

## APPROVED MINUTES

The General Meeting of the Commission for Children and Families was held on Monday, **January 11, 2010**, in Room 739 of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles. **Please note that these minutes are intended as a summary and not as a verbatim accounting or transcription of events at this meeting.**

### COMMISSIONERS PRESENT (Quorum Established)

Patricia Curry	Steven M. Olivas, Esq.
Carol O. Biondi	Sandra Rudnick
Ann Franzen	Stacey Savelle
Susan F. Friedman	Adelina Sorkin, LCSW/ACSW
Helen A. Kleinberg	Martha Trevino Powell
Dr. La-Doris McClanely	Dr. Harriette F. Williams
Rev. Cecil L. Murray	

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Curry at 10:05 a.m.

### **II. INTRODUCTIONS**

Self introductions were made.

### **III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- **January 11, 2010**

#### Action Taken:

On motion of Commissioner Sorkin, seconded by Commissioner Rudnick, the Agenda for January 11, 2010, was unanimously approved.

Chair Curry noted that the Visitation Report by Commissioner Kleinberg originally deferred to today's meeting was rescheduled to the meeting of February 1, 2010.

### **IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- **November 2, 2009**

Commissioner Sorkin requested the following changes to the November 2, 2009, minutes:

500 West Temple Street, Hall of Administration, Room B-22, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: 213/974-1558 Fax: 213/625-5813

[www.lachildrenscommission.org](http://www.lachildrenscommission.org)

Page 3, Under Chair's Report

- An Ad Hoc Committee was formed to oversee matters relating to Board motions over the last year regarding electronic record-keeping. ~~She~~ **Chair Curry** attended a meeting with Jackie White, DCEO, and Richard Sanchez, CIO, and discussed the following: ...”

Page 4, Under Discussion Items/Presentations, DCFS Strategic Planning-Lisa Parrish, DCFS

- The new Strategic Plan **should recognize** ~~recognizes~~ the different kinds of youth populations ...”
- Be sure to include all appropriate public and private partners including the Probation Department in the development of the ~~strategic plan~~ **Strategic Plan**.
- Ensure the ~~strategic plan~~ **Strategic Plan** includes action steps, an implementation plan, benchmarks, timelines and targets to identify whether Strategic Plan goals have been met.

Page 5, Under Director's Report

- The Commission requested that DCFS provide the Commission with a list of issues the “Red Team” will be reviewing. ~~The Commission also recommended that the Red Team interface with Children Social Workers to address education issues for youth to ensure they are ready for Emancipation.~~

Page 5, Under Announcements

- Commissioner Franzen extended an invitation to the First Parent Celebration lunch on November 7, 2009, at the Parkcrest Church in Lakewood. This event is sponsored by DCFS and ~~Parents In partnership~~ **“Parents In Partnership.”**

Commissioner Kleinberg requested the following change to the November 2, 2009 minutes:

Page 4, Under Child Wellness-Tina Pedersen, Adelina Sorkin, Brian Mahan, CEO – Children's & Families Well Being Cluster

Action Taken:

By Common Consent, ~~the revised Los Angeles County Child Wellness Policy will be brought back at the November 16, 2009, meeting for review~~ **the Commission approved the draft LA County Child Wellness Policy as to form pending further revisions from the CEO; the final Policy will be brought back at the November 16, 2009, meeting.**

Action Taken:

On motion of Commissioner Trevino-Powell, seconded by Vice Chair Savelle, the minutes for November 2, 2009, were unanimously approved as corrected.

- **November 16, 2009**

Commissioner Sorkin requested the following changes to the November 16, 2009, minutes:

Page 3, Under Discussion Items, 2008-09 Annual Report

- Commissioner Sorkin reported that 11 of 15 Commissioners participated in the development of the 2008-09 Annual Report, which documents the Commission's accomplishments for the period of July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009. In preparation for this report, she reviewed approximately 17 **prior annual reports** ~~reports, which included approximately 24 years of Commission accomplishments.~~

Page 7, Under Discussion Items, Training On Healthy Lifestyles

- Chair Sorkin reported that ~~the Commission is~~ **three Commission Committees (Childhood Wellness, Relative Caregiver, and Faith-Based) are** working with the City of Pasadena Public Health Department and DCFS to provide a Community Wellness & Healthy Lifestyles Program for Relative Caregivers in December. This program facilitator, ~~sponsored by the~~ **who is the Physical Fitness and Nutrition Coordinator for the** City of Pasadena Public Health Department, has agreed to provide training at no cost to DCFS or the Commission. The event is tentatively programmed to take place in Pasadena ~~(Spa 3)~~ **(SPA 3)** in a Faith-Based facility. A draft flyer was provided by Commissioner Sorkin (copies on file). **It is anticipated that these trainings for relative caregivers will be held in other SPAs.**

**Action Taken:**

On motion of Commissioner Trevino-Powell, seconded by Vice Chair Savelle, the minutes for November 16, 2009, were unanimously approved as corrected.

- **December 7, 2009**

Commissioner Biondi requested the following change to the December 7, 2009, minutes:

Page 2, Under Discussion/Action Items, Optimist Youth Panel Discussion

- ~~Most of the camps are not in Los Angeles County;~~ **Some of the youths came from camps in other parts of the County;** the camps provide lots of exercise; they are concerned for personal safety; and there are lots of movies at school.

Commissioner Kleinberg requested the following change to the December 7, 2009, minutes:

Page 3, Under Committee/Liaison Reports, Missouri Model Update – Carol Biondi

- Missouri sets the national model example as it has a sustaining recidivism of less than 8 percent. Missouri, in many experts' opinion, has a highly successful system. The Missouri state system is **relative relevant** to the Los Angeles County system of housing youth in small groups in areas close to their community and rehabilitating their behavior, as opposed to punishing youths.

Commissioner Sorkin requested the following changes to the December 7, 2009, minutes:

Page 4, Under Committee/Liaison Reports, Childhood Wellness – Tina Pedersen/Nina Sorkin

- The Committee's first activity (a Community Wellness & Healthy Lifestyle Training) will be held on December 10, 2009, at St. Andrews Catholic Church in Pasadena, CA. The training is aimed at improving the dietary and physical activity habits of participants with the goal of promoting the development of healthy lifestyles **for children in care of relatives.**

**Action Taken:**

On motion of Commissioner Franzen, seconded by Vice Chair Savelle, the minutes for December 7, 2009, were unanimously approved as corrected.

**V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Ploehn reported the following:

- Governor Schwarzenegger approved the new State budget on January 8, 2010; DCFS Fiscal Operations have been working with the CEO on DCFS program funding. Some programs are contingent upon federal assistance which affects state funding; the Departmental budget is still in the planning stages.
- Emergency Response (ER) case loads are at a very high level which has necessitated staffing enhancement. Because DCFS cannot hire more Children's Social Workers (CSW) at this time, an alternate plan has been drafted by the DCFS Executive Team, headed by Charles Tadlock and other managers. Non-case carrying Social Worker's jobs were re-assessed for possible rollover to case carrying functions. It will take 200 CSWs to reduce the case ratio to 18:1, which is still too high a caseload. In March 2010, 100 CSWs will be redeployed to case carrying positions, and it is anticipated that an 18:1 case ratio will be fully achieved by April 2010.
- Training will be provided for all CSWs being reassigned to ER's front end functions. Mr. Eric Marts, Deputy Director, DCFS, who heads the ER Academy, is retraining ER CSWs using processes and systemic changes within the Emergency Response Training Academy to provide effective services for children who enter the DCFS system. He will also pilot a program to put together a group of CSWs with law enforcement and/or juvenile justice experience to improve investigations.

- A retirement luncheon for Ms. Susan Kerr is scheduled for February 11, 2010; Mr. Ted Meyers will have a retirement dinner on January 28<sup>th</sup>. An invitation was extended to Commission members.

**Action Taken:**

The Commission recommended that DCFS reassign experienced (seasoned) CSWs to ER, and requested that Director Ploehn provide an update on Independent Living Program (ILP) funding in light of the recent budget cuts. Director Ploehn's verbal report was received and filed.

**VI. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Curry reported the following:

- Funding for the ILP has been dramatically reduced. A meeting has been scheduled to discuss ILP on January 19, 2010, at 3:00 p.m. in the Executive Office Conference Room in Room 383.
- A meeting has been scheduled to discuss crossover youth on January 14, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. in the Executive Office Conference Room in Room 383. Key individuals in Probation and DCFS will be in attendance.
- Vice Chair Friedman will facilitate a meeting on January 11, 2010 at 12:15 p.m. to discuss policy and procedure recommendations regarding child fatalities in the Probation system.

**VII. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**

- **Updates on Title IV-E Waiver**

Chair Curry welcomed Lisa Parrish, Susan Kerr, DCFS; Dave Mitchell, Probation; Dr. Jacqueline McCroskey, USC (School of Social Work); Bonnie Armstrong, Casey Family Programs, and other individuals who participated in a roundtable discussion and provided updates on the Title IV-E Waiver (Waiver). Discussion ensued on the Waiver funding impact on DCFS and Probation programs and potential solutions to better serve children in the jurisdiction of children protective services.

The following was highlighted during discussion:

**\$50 MILLION REINVESTMENT FOR 2010/2011 FORWARD**

- There is a budget of \$50 million in reinvestment funds for FY 2010-11 and forward. The allocation of funds totals \$46.1 million to DCFS and \$3.9 million to Probation. DCFS has \$20 million earmarked for the coming Fiscal Year, totaling \$14 million in Family Preservation, \$2.5 million in PIDP, and the remainder going to programs such as Youth Permanency, TDM Facilitation.

### PROBATION CURRENT PROGRAMS

- Probation's plan has been to transition youths out of Foster Homes and reunify them with their families, allowing assistance funds to be reinvested.
- Two major programs, Functional Family Therapy (FFT), and Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST), have played a large role in bringing youth together with their families and out of the Foster Homes.
- There has also been a tremendous increase in Wraparound services.

### CHALLENGES

- Probation has not been successful in generating reinvestment funds, which raises the following challenges for the Department:
  - How does it reduce youths in care with Probation to generate more investment dollars?
  - How does it work more with the Community?
  - How does it address Court Placement/Court Buy in to ensure safety in the Community?
  - How does it address the philosophy of prison vs. non-prison?
  - How does it develop a growing capacity for better Community-Based Services?

### OTHER FUNDS

- Funding assistance for Probation has been available through various programs; there is room for Probation to reinvest funds. The following grants are available to Probation:
  - \$25 million from the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act
  - \$24 million from the Youthful Offender Block Grant
  - \$50 million from the Juvenile Probation Camp Fund
  - Funds may also be available through collaborative efforts (City Gang Funds & Charter School Funds-Education)

### LEARN FROM DCFS

DCFS has been successful at prevention and should be used as a model for Probation. The Commission provided the Probation Department with the following recommendations:

- Examine and/or research other Models used; focus on successful Models.
- Engage more with community such as faith-based groups.
- Establish a better rapport with the court system.
- Engage in treating families. A mentoring program is important for prevention; children of incarcerated parents are eligible for mentoring.

- Implement information data sharing between Departments which include access to systems (CSW and CMS).
- Reductions may be reached by DCFS and Probation working together; a joint responsibility between Departments (i.e. communicate more with the Department of Mental Health).
- Focus on education and other prevention-based programs.
- Implement goal tracking and direct funds towards successful programs.
- Build collaborative working relationships between Departments and community programs which are essential to successful prevention and rehabilitation (crossover).

**Action Taken:**

The Commission received and filed Title IV-E Waiver reports presented by DCFS and Probation ([copies on file](#)). Chair's notes were received and filed ([copies on file](#)).

**VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public speakers.

**IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were none.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Curry at 12:00 p.m.